

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please change the paragraph stating at line 2 in page 24 of the specification to read:

21 Figs. 16A and 16B show the fifth embodiment of the present invention relative to the transmission type differential interference optical system. This embodiment uses a polarization optical element which separates an incident ray of light into two linearly polarized components vibrating perpendicular to each other and causes them to emerge in parallel. In the fifth embodiment also, the two objective lenses 10 and 11 with different back focal points are used. In Fig. 16A, the objective lens 10 is inserted in the optical path, and a ray of light from the illumination source 1 is converted by the polarizer 2 into linearly polarized light, which is incident on the Wollaston prism 3 and then is separated into two linearly polarized components vibrating perpendicular to each other. The two linearly polarized components are rendered nearly parallel by the light-collecting behavior of the condenser lens 4 and are incident on the object 5 to be observed. The two linearly polarized components are collected at the back focal point FB of the objective lens 10, and after being combined on the same path by the Nomarski prism 12, are caused to interfere by the analyzer 8. Where the objective lens 11 with a different back focal point is used, as shown in Fig. 16B, a prism 15 composed of two plane-parallel birefringent members cemented to each other is inserted in the optical path between the Nomarski prism 12 and the analyzer 8. The prism 15 ~~separates an incident ray of light into~~ combines two linearly polarized components vibrating perpendicular to each other, and travelling parallel with each other as they emerge from the Nomarski prism 12, into an identical path. ~~and causes the components to emerge in parallel.~~ The amount of its separation corresponds to a difference between the back focal points FB of the objective lenses 10 and 11 according to Eq. (2). The two plane-parallel plates of the prism 15 are such that the phase difference becomes zero with respect to the two linearly polarized components, and it is not required that the contrast of the differential interference optical system is adjusted by the phase difference adjusting means when the objective lens is switched.